RACE TO THE TOP

New Jersey Report

Year 2: December 2012–December 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

June 2014

Executive Summary

Race to the Top overview

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. ARRA provided $4.35 billion for the Race to the Top fund, of which approximately $4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.[1] In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) awarded Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia. The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers. Since the Race to the Top Phase 1 and 2 competitions, the Department has made additional grants under the Race to the Top Phase 3, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge,[2] and Race to the Top – District[3] competitions.

In 2011, the Department awarded Phase 3 grants to seven additional States, which were finalists in the Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 competitions. Race to the Top Phase 3 focuses on supporting efforts to leverage comprehensive statewide reform, while also improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education.

The Race to the Top program is built on the framework of comprehensive reform in four education reform areas:

- Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices;
- Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and
- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Since education is a complex system, sustained and lasting instructional improvement in classrooms, schools, local educational agencies (LEAs), and States will not be achieved through piecemeal change. Race to the Top requires that States and LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan (participating LEAs)[4] take into account their local context to design and implement the most effective and innovative approaches that meet the needs of their educators, students, and families.

Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU is to provide assistance to States as they implement unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that not only addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, but is also designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU works with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helps States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose is to support Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top grantees, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that adjustments are required to an approved plan, the grantee must submit a formal amendment request to the Department for consideration. States may submit for Department approval amendment requests to a plan and budget, provided such changes do not significantly affect the scope or objectives of the approved plans. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR section 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).[5]

State-specific summary report

The Department uses the information gathered during the review process (*e.g.*, through monthly calls, onsite reviews, and Annual Performance Reports (APRs) to draft State-specific summary reports).[6] The State-specific summary report serves as an assessment of a State's annual Race to the Top implementation. The Year 2 report for Phase 3 grantees highlights successes and accomplishments, identifies challenges, and provides lessons learned from implementation from approximately December 2012 through December 2013.

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[1] The remaining funds were awarded under the Race to the Top Assessment program. More information about the Race to the Top Assessment program is available at www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment.

[2] More information on the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html.

[3] More information on Race to the Top – District can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html.

[4] Participating local educational agencies (LEAs) are those LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's Memorandum of Understanding with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

[5] More information about the Implementation and Support Unit's (ISU's) program review process, State Annual Performance Report (APR) data, and State Scopes of Work can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html.

[6] Additional State-specific data on progress against annual performance measures and goals reported in the Year 2 APRs can be found on the Race to the Top Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.

State's education reform agenda[7]

To help ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and careers, New Jersey has established education reform goals that include closing the achievement gap and improving the academic achievement of all students; producing high school graduates who are ready to succeed in college and careers; and substantially improving college attendance rates for students statewide.

In a reorganization that directly aligns with Race to the Top priorities, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) created four divisions, each corresponding with a basic building block of the State's reform plan. The four divisions are: Academics (standards, assessments, curriculum, and instruction); Talent (educator effectiveness); Performance (targets, measurement, analysis, and accountability); and Innovation (high-quality, nontraditional methods of delivering kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) schooling and technology). These divisions focus on the State's priority initiatives for implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments, developing a statewide framework for educator evaluation, leveraging the effective use of data to improve instruction, and increasing the number of effective charter schools, respectively. New Jersey's $37,847,648 Race to the Top grant, half of which is allocated to participating LEAs, has bolstered the State's efforts to implement this reform agenda.

State Year 1 summary

In the first year of Race to the Top, New Jersey focused on creating the systems and processes required to fully implement its education reform initiatives. It began by establishing a Race to the Top office with designated project managers to manage the approved Scope of Work, build relationships with and monitor participating LEAs, and develop the various communication structures with other program offices – such as the Office of Charter Schools and the Office of STEM Education to ensure that Race to the Top activities were implemented with fidelity to the plan.

The major programmatic components of the State's work in Year 1 involved developing the first version of model curricula and formative assessments in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) aligned to the CCSS. These resources, developed by teams of over 300 educators, were implemented throughout the year in priority and focus schools and made available statewide. The State also launched two educator evaluation pilot programs – one for teachers and one for principals – in Year 1. Nineteen LEAs applied and won grants to participate in the teacher evaluation pilot, while 15 LEAs signed on to the principal evaluation pilot. The pilot districts began training on and implementing an approved teacher or principal evaluation

system, aligned with the State's evaluation framework in school year (SY) 2012-2013.

The State also began the preparations for developing an Instructional Improvement System (IIS) in Year 1. The State did research to understand the most important elements of such a system for New Jersey and developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) to recruit a qualified vendor to develop the system. The State experienced delays during this procurement process and was not able to finalize a vendor or develop the system by the beginning of SY 2012-2013 as planned.

State Year 2 summary

Accomplishments

New Jersey's Race to the Top office, co-managed by two project managers who are responsible for overseeing Race to the Top activities, continued to work with the State's program offices and LEAs to implement Race to the Top activities. During Year 2, the State completed a full cycle of sub-recipient monitoring which included analyzing programmatic and fiscal reports from LEAs throughout the year and completing onsite program reviews for LEAs with Race to the Top allocations over $150,000. The State also maintained its various project management and communication structures, a web-based Scope of Work management system for LEAs, a State-level Race to the Top website and a Race to the Top email box dedicated to providing timely answers to questions from LEA representatives.

During Year 2, the State built on the Standards and Assessments work begun in Year 1, by revising its model curriculum units and formative assessments aligned to CCSS in mathematics and ELA to include enhanced Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and classroom resources for teachers. The State also made progress on completing model curriculum for other subjects including visual and performing arts, health and physical education, world languages, and social studies. Many of the new and revised resources were loaded onto a new online tool – the NJ Educator Resource Exchange – that allows teachers to download helpful lessons, frameworks, and activities that support teaching the CCSS.[8]

After experiencing procurement delays in Year 1, the State procured a vendor to design, build and implement its IIS platform. The State is currently in the process of developing a new plan for this project. In the meantime, the State maintained a smaller-scale, interim version of the IIS called the School Accountability Management System (SAMS) which provides assessment administration and analysis for the State's lowest-achieving schools.

In the area of Great Teachers and Leaders, the NJDOE completed the second round of a teacher evaluation system pilot program and a principal evaluation system pilot program. During the pilot year, LEAs selected and implemented approved educator evaluation

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7   This section reflects counts of schools and students reported in the State's Phase 3 application.

8   Available at www.njcore.org.

systems aligned with the State's educator effectiveness framework. Feedback and lessons learned from the pilot were collected by the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) and codified in reports published throughout the year. Ultimately, the experience from the SY 2012-2013 pilot programs helped to inform the State's educator effectiveness law and regulations that were put in place in fall 2013. All LEAs statewide were required to evaluate all teachers and principals in SY 2013-2014.

Further, the State used Race to the Top money to fund external contractors who supported the State's Office of Charter Schools in reviewing and approving new charter school applications. The application process from Year 1 resulted in six fully approved charter schools that opened their doors in fall 2013. The spring 2013 review process yielded three new charter schools that are eligible to open in fall 2014.

Challenges

New Jersey faced some internal capacity challenges that led to delays in certain projects in its plan. For example, because it was operating without a permanent content lead in social studies, the State did not complete the model curriculum and formative assessments for social studies in grades K-8 by the end of Year 2 as planned. Similarly, the State initially struggled to find internal expertise to support the development of model curriculum units with scaffolds – or accommodations – for English learners and students with disabilities.

The State also experienced significant delays in developing its IIS. Originally, the State planned to have this resource available to LEAs for SY 2012-2013. However, because of a longer than expected procurement process, the contract was not signed until December 2013. According to the State, the system will not fully launch until late summer 2014.

State Success Factors

Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans

After hiring State project managers, establishing contacts at each participating LEA, and approving LEAs' Scopes of Work in Year 1, the State started to monitor participating LEAs for progress against their plans. In Year 2, the State completed a full cycle of sub-recipient monitoring which included analyzing programmatic and fiscal reports from LEAs throughout the year and completing onsite program reviews for LEAs with Race to the Top allocations over $150,000.

Throughout Year 2, New Jersey continued to maintain its State-specific Race to the Top website, which provides updated information and guidance for LEAs. The website houses an open comment section to collect feedback from the field on Race to the Top initiatives and implementation. The State maintained its Race to the Top email account, which is monitored regularly by the project managers, to communicate with LEAs about LEA- and school-level implementation.

As part of the Department's Community of Practice on Stakeholder Communications and Engagement, New Jersey participated in the RSN "social media use" research project that resulted in the publication, *Measurable Success, Growing Adoption, Vast Potential: Social Media Use Among State and Local Education Agencies.*[9] The report includes data from 23 State educational agencies (SEAs) and 11 LEAs. The findings of the project are presented in four areas: usage, tools and audiences, planning and measuring, and challenges and opportunities.

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[9] Available at: http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/social-media-use.pdf.
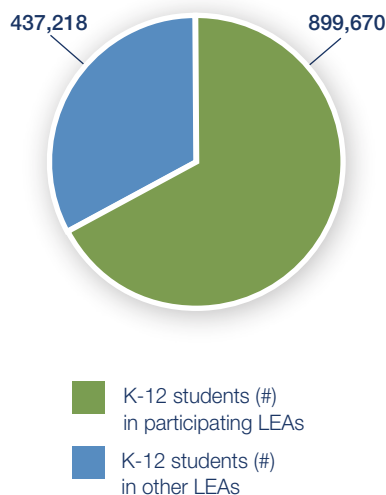
LEA participation

New Jersey reported 322 participating LEAs as of June 30, 2013. This represents 66 percent of the State's K-12 students and 73 percent of its students in poverty.

LEAs participating in New Jersey's Race to the Top plan

364   322

- Participating LEAs (#)
- Other LEAs
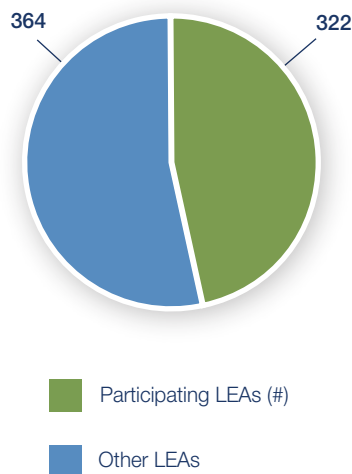
K-12 students in LEAs participating in New Jersey's Race to the Top plan

437,218   899,670

- K-12 students (#) in participating LEAs
- K-12 students (#) in other LEAs

Students in poverty in LEAs participating in New Jersey's Race to the Top plan

112,816   393,552

- Students in poverty (#) in participating LEAs
- Students in poverty (#) in other LEAs
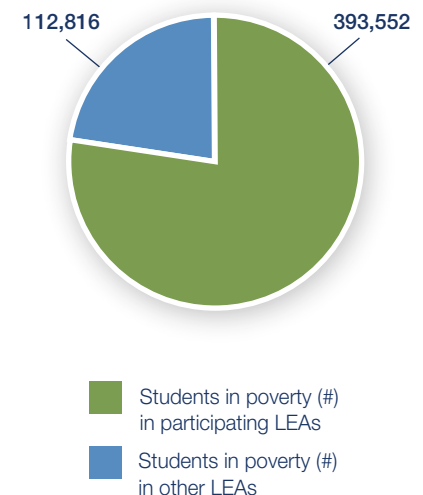
The number of K-12 students and number of students in poverty statewide are calculated using pre-release data from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD). Students in poverty statewide comes from the CCD measure of the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch subsidy (commonly used as a proxy for the number of students who are economically disadvantaged in a school) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program. The students in poverty statewide count is an aggregation of school-level counts summed to one State-level count. Statistical procedures were applied systematically by CCD to these data to prevent potential disclosure of information about individual students as well as for data quality assurance; consequently State-level counts may differ from those originally reported by the State. Please note that these data are considered to be preliminary as of November 1, 2013.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

During the sub-recipient monitoring process in Year 2, the State learned valuable lessons about LEA capacity to implement reform initiatives. In general, the State found that smaller LEAs with smaller Race to the Top allocations had more difficulty ensuring timely and accurate reporting of programmatic progress and expenditures than larger LEAs. To that end, the State initiated targeted support to those LEAs to ensure that they were spending funds appropriately and meeting the goals in their Scopes of Work. Moving forward, the State's Race to the Top office will engage with other State-level program offices to analyze the impact of Race to the Top-supported initiatives such as educator evaluation and model curriculum at the LEA level.

Although it completed monitoring for all participating LEAs as planned in Year 2, the State did report that performance managing and providing technical assistance to all 322 LEAs – nearly half of all LEAs in the State – is a challenge given the small capacity of the State's Race to the Top office. Nevertheless, in an annual survey administered by the State in fall 2013, 91 percent of participating LEAs indicated that they were "satisfied" with the State's administration of Race to the Top.

Student outcomes data

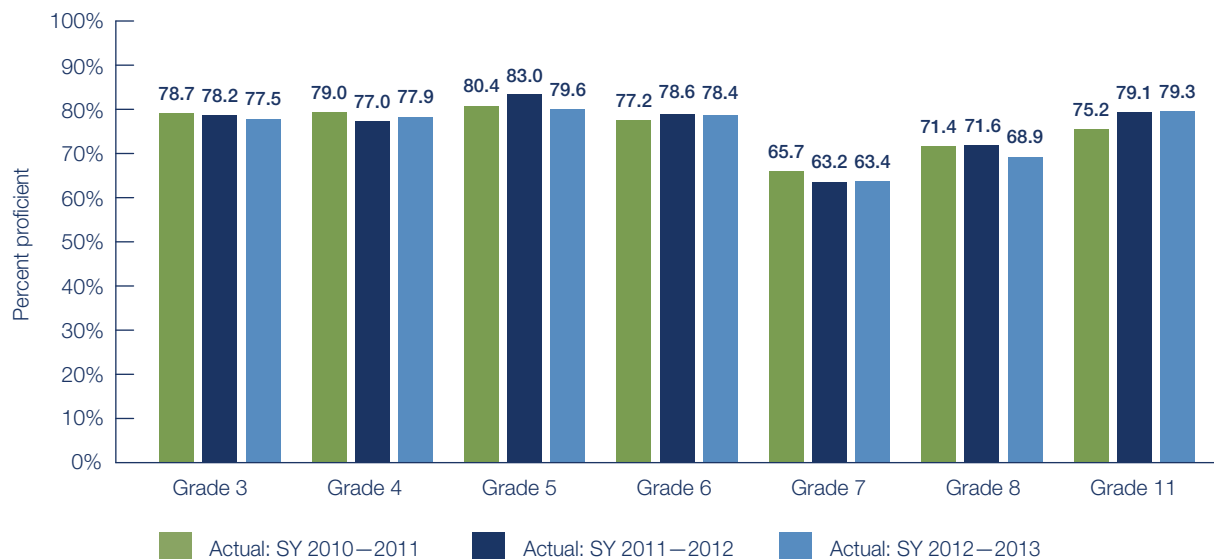Student performance in SY 2012-2013 on the State's summative assessment, New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) in ELA and mathematics remained about the same as in SY 2011-2012, with a slight increase in seventh grade ELA and slight decreases in fifth and eighth grade mathematics.

Student proficiency on New Jersey's ELA assessment

Grade	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2011—2012	Actual: SY 2012—2013
Grade 3	63.1	66.8	66.3
Grade 4	62.8	58.6	59.6
Grade 5	61.0	62.1	61.2
Grade 6	66.7	64.6	66.0
Grade 7	63.4	60.9	65.0
Grade 8	82.0	81.9	81.4
Grade 11	89.3	91.1	91.0

Percent proficient

Student proficiency on New Jersey's mathematics assessment

Grade	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2011—2012	Actual: SY 2012—2013
Grade 3	78.7	78.2	77.5
Grade 4	79.0	77.0	77.9
Grade 5	80.4	83.0	79.6
Grade 6	77.2	78.6	78.4
Grade 7	65.7	63.2	63.4
Grade 8	71.4	71.6	68.9
Grade 11	75.2	79.1	79.3

Percent proficient

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data for the ELA State assessment reported as of: November 12, 2013. Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data for the mathematics State assessment reported as of: November 15, 2013.
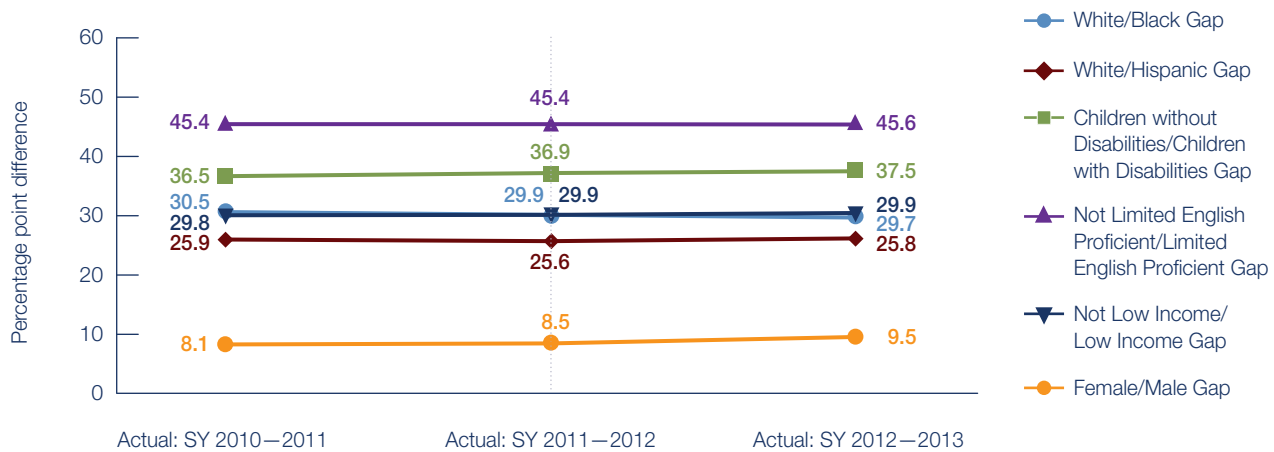
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.
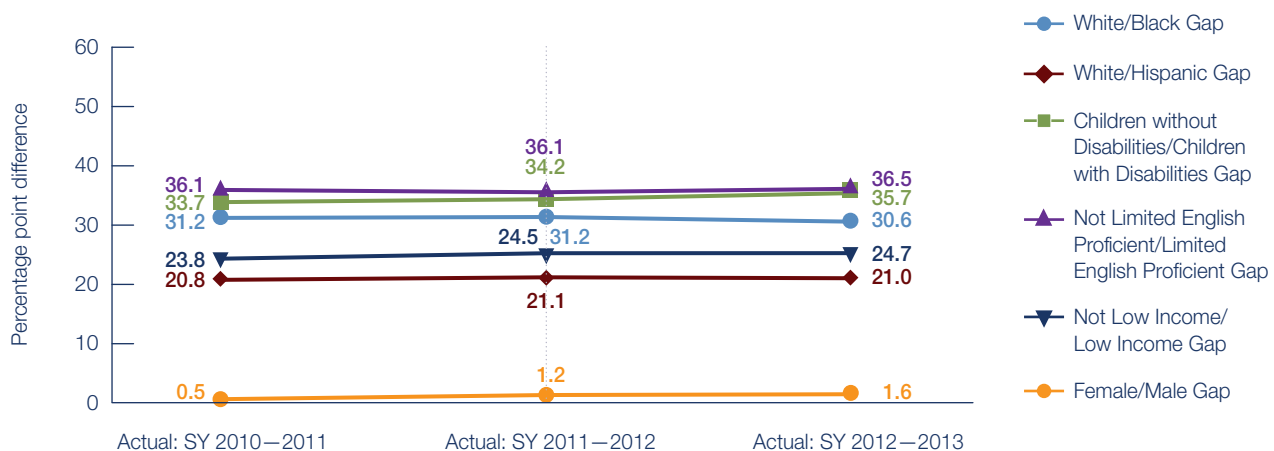
State Success Factors

The achievement gap between different sub-groups of students remained relatively the same between SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013 in ELA and mathematics.

Achievement gap on New Jersey's ELA assessment

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap
- Female/Male Gap

Y-axis: Percentage point difference (0–60)

X-axis: Actual: SY 2010—2011, Actual: SY 2011—2012, Actual: SY 2012—2013

Data values:
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap: 45.4, 45.4, 45.6
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap: 36.5, 36.9, 37.5
- White/Black Gap: 30.5, 29.9, 29.9
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap: 29.8, 29.9, 29.7
- White/Hispanic Gap: 25.9, 25.6, 25.8
- Female/Male Gap: 8.1, 8.5, 9.5

Achievement gap on New Jersey's mathematics assessment

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap
- Female/Male Gap

Y-axis: Percentage point difference (0–60)

X-axis: Actual: SY 2010—2011, Actual: SY 2011—2012, Actual: SY 2012—2013

Data values:
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap: 36.1, 36.1, 36.5
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap: 33.7, 34.2, 35.7
- White/Black Gap: 31.2, 31.2, 30.6
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap: 23.8, 24.5, 24.7
- White/Hispanic Gap: 20.8, 21.1, 21.0
- Female/Male Gap: 0.5, 1.2, 1.6

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data for the ELA State assessment reported as of: November 12, 2013. Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data for the mathematics State assessment reported as of: November 15, 2013.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap over three school years between two sub-groups on the State's ELA and mathematics assessments.

Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

If the achievement gap narrowed between two sub-groups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two sub-groups, the line will slope upward.
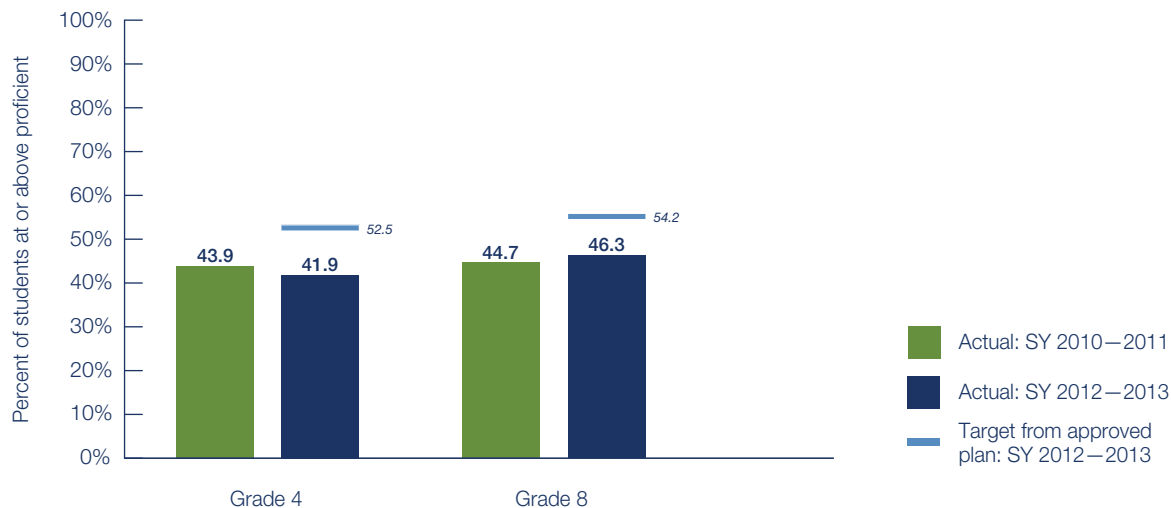
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.
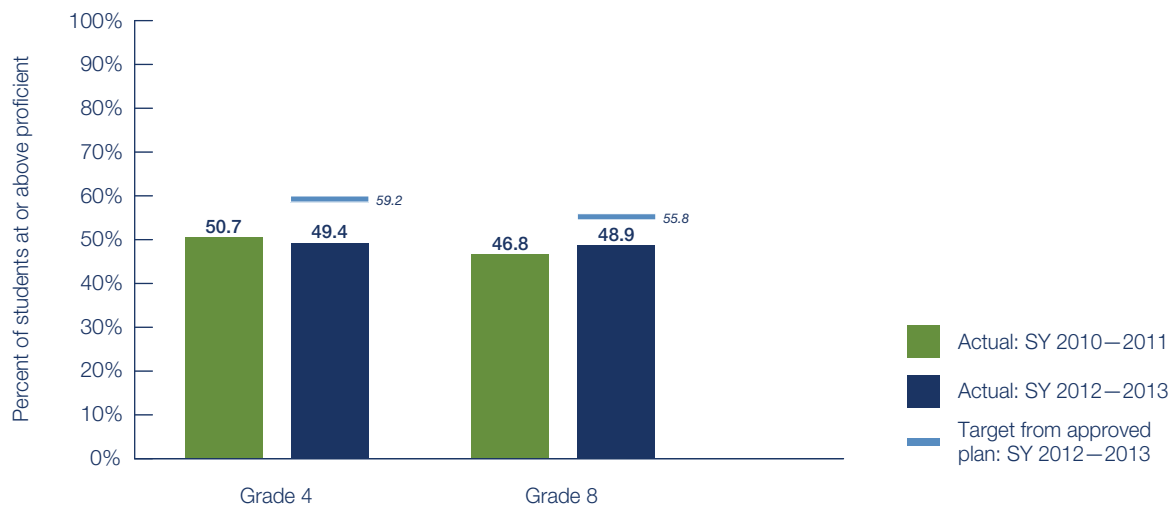
State Success Factors

New Jersey's results on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and mathematics assessments for grades four and eight remained about the same as the SY 2011 results.
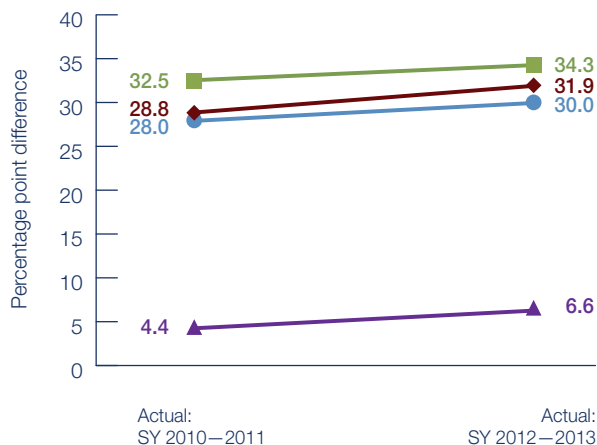
Student proficiency, NAEP reading

Percent of students at or above proficient

Grade 4		Grade 8	
43.9	41.9 (Target 52.5)	44.7	46.3 (Target 54.2)

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011 (green)
- Actual: SY 2012—2013 (dark blue)
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013 (light blue line)

Student proficiency, NAEP mathematics

Percent of students at or above proficient

Grade 4		Grade 8	
50.7	49.4 (Target 59.2)	46.8	48.9 (Target 55.8)

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011 (green)
- Actual: SY 2012—2013 (dark blue)
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013 (light blue line)

NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

New Jersey's approved Race to the Top plan included targets for NAEP results based on percentages, not based on students' average scale scores.
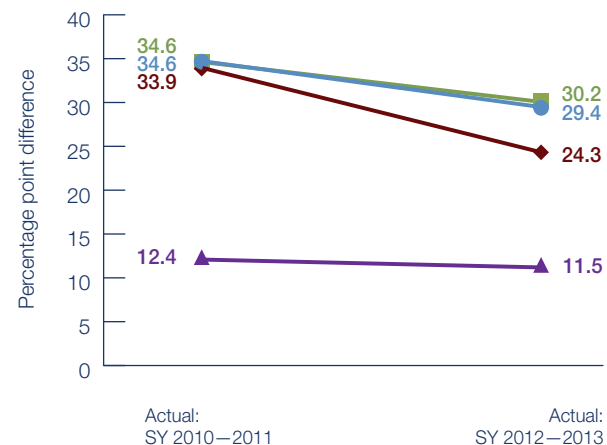
The achievement gap widened slightly between sub-groups of fourth graders on the NAEP reading assessment. For eighth graders the achievement gap decreased by as much as 9.6 percentage points. In mathematics, the achievement gap narrowed among all sub-groups in both grades four and eight.
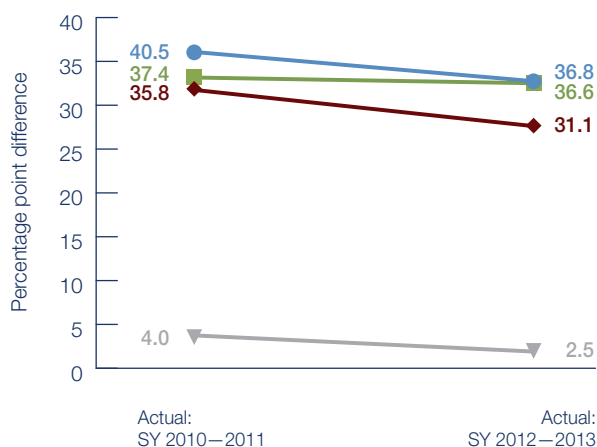
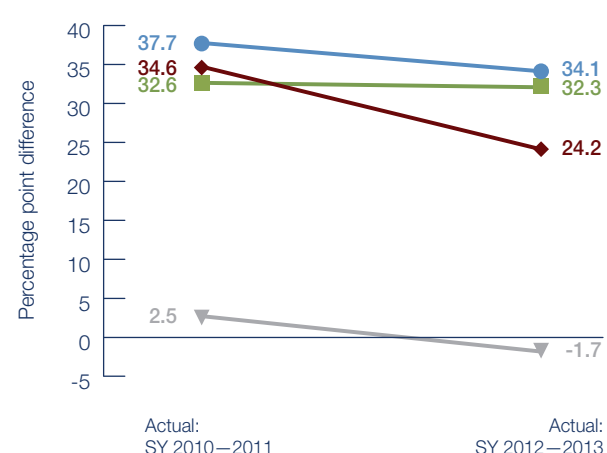### Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

- 32.5 → 34.3
- 28.8 → 31.9
- 28.0 → 30.0
- 4.4 → 6.6

Actual: SY 2010—2011 | Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

- 34.6 → 30.2
- 34.6 → 29.4
- 33.9 → 24.3
- 12.4 → 11.5

Actual: SY 2010—2011 | Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

- 40.5 → 36.8
- 37.4 → 36.6
- 35.8 → 31.1
- 4.0 → 2.5

Actual: SY 2010—2011 | Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

- 37.7 → 34.1
- 34.6 → 32.3
- 32.6 → 24.2
- 2.5 → -1.7

Actual: SY 2010—2011 | Actual: SY 2012—2013

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Female/Male Gap
- Male/Female Gap
- Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/ National School Lunch Program Eligible

NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. New Jersey's NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two sub-groups on the NAEP reading and NAEP mathematics.

Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

If the achievement gap narrowed between two sub-groups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two sub-groups, the line will slope upward.

State Success Factors

New Jersey's high school graduation rate increased in SY 2011-2012 compared to SY 2010-2011 and the State exceeded its Race to the Top target by approximately two percentage points.

High school graduation rate

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011
- Actual: SY 2011—2012
- Target from approved plan: SY 2011—2012
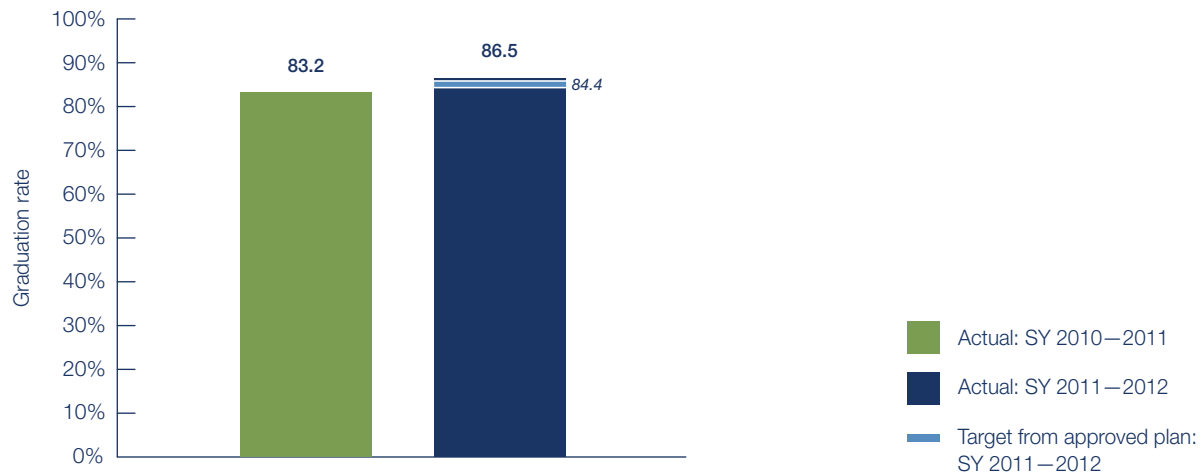
Preliminary SY 2011-2012 data reported as of: August 13, 2013.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

Implementing rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career is an integral aspect of education reform in Race to the Top States.

Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments

During Year 2, New Jersey worked to develop an enhanced version of the K-12 mathematics and ELA model curricula it created in Year 1. The updated version includes additional classroom resources for teachers along with revised SLOs, units of study, and high-quality formative assessments. Each model curriculum unit is complemented by State-developed formative assessments that help teachers test for understanding at six-week intervals.

To launch the revision process, the State recruited and engaged with volunteer educators, including principals, teachers, LEA leaders and higher education faculty, to build out enhancements to its mathematics and ELA units. These units included improved SLOs and recommended resources for teachers such as classroom activities, lessons plans and videos. The State completed all units of version 2.0 of the model curriculum and formative assessments in mathematics and ELA on schedule, posted them to the model curriculum website and implemented them along with the associated formative assessments in priority schools.

The State also continued its work developing and revising model curriculum units, SLOs and formative assessments aligned to the New Jersey Common Core Curriculum Standards (NJCCCS) in social studies, visual and performing arts, world languages and health and physical education. The State completed and posted initial model curriculum units in each of these subjects between fall and winter 2013. The State also planned to complete the model curriculum and formative assessments for science in Year 2, but delayed this work while it decided whether or not to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards. In the meantime, the State decided to build a model curriculum aligned to its existing NJCCCS standards in science and planned to make these resources available to educators by the end of Year 2. Due to delays in the writing and vetting process, the State plans to post these resources by the beginning of SY 2014-2015.

During Year 2, the State continued to work with in-house and external experts, including 12 volunteer educators to develop model curriculum in mathematics and ELA with scaffolds – or accommodations – for English learners and students with disabilities. The State completed all five mathematics units for English learners by the end of Year 2 and started the process of revising the ELA units in fall 2013. Scaffolding the mathematics and ELA model curriculum units in special education proved challenging, as the State determined it did not have the in-house capacity to complete this work on time and with high-quality. To help mitigate these challenges, the State convened an SLO workgroup composed of content experts and educators to begin the process of completing the model curriculum units. By October 2013, the workgroup had developed initial versions of SLOs for mathematics

and ELA for grades three through five. A second phase of SLO development and review took place in November 2013, and included SLOs for mathematics and ELA for grades K-2, along with additional special education resources for grades three through five.

In addition to the State-created formative assessments aligned to the model curriculum, the State procured a contractor to create additional interim assessment items. These items will be housed in an online assessment bank and available for use by educators who wish to build their own interim assessments. Beginning in September 2013, the State has been working with the contractor to review batches of assessment items for rigor and alignment to CCSS. Additional phases of this vetting process are intended to continue through Year 3.

New Jersey uses its online resources to support the distribution and use of it model curriculum units and formative assessments. For example, the State continued its use of SAMS to administer formative assessments in its priority schools. In addition to test administration, the system also includes a scoring and analysis tool; a dashboard that displays up-to-date information on student-level assessment, attendance, and discipline data; and project management software that helps school leaders manage progress against their School Improvement Plans. The State houses the model curriculum units on a State-developed website and in Year 2 developed a complementary site, the Educator Resource Exchange, to facilitate the sharing of resources among educators throughout the State. Using the website, educators can contribute, download, rate, collect and share educational resources aligned to the CCSS and NJCCCS.

One mechanism the State will use to create resources to be shared on the NJ Educator Resource Exchange is the Model Lessons project. In fall 2013, New Jersey trained upwards of 200 educators in writing exemplar lessons aligned to the CCSS. The State trained an additional 32 educators to assess each submitted lesson for quality using the Tri-State/EQuIP rubric, a tool used to identify high-quality materials aligned to the CCSS. The State's plan was to allow teachers to begin submitting model lessons for review by spring 2013; however, due to delays in the planning process, the submission process will not open until spring 2014. Selected lessons will be posted on the NJ Educator Resource Exchange.

During summer 2013, the State launched a three-part series of professional development workshops to help educators understand and use the State's model curriculum resources and understand their relationship with the State's larger goals around transitioning to CCSS and effectively evaluating educators. The first session in the State's suite of professional development activities was the Connected Action Roadmap (CAR), which provided training for educators on the value of professional learning communities (PLCs) in the transition to CCSS. Reflecting on Assessment Data, the second part of the summer series provided training on the New Jersey model curriculum and

assessments and their use in implementing the CCSS. These sessions focused on helping educators understand how using data could support lesson development and remediation strategies in classrooms. Shifting Gears, the third and final part of the summer series, combined professional development in CCSS with training on the educator evaluation system, helping educators understand the implications of the CCSS in measuring student growth and evaluating educators.

Shifting Gears

To complement the final component of its three-part professional development series, Shifting Gears, the State created a Shifting Gears website to house resources related to the trainings. These resources included video lessons on topics such as text complexity, student growth objectives, and CCSS mathematics practices. The site also houses training presentations, discussion questions, and group activities that local facilitators can use for "turn-key" trainings in their schools or districts.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

While the State experienced some initial in-house capacity challenges that delayed the creation of certain components of the model curriculum project – particularly the scaffolds for special education, certain NJCCCS model curriculum, and the model lessons project – it did make progress revising and enhancing the CCSS model curriculum developed in Year 1. The State utilized professional development feedback surveys and other self-reporting mechanisms to track how pervasively the model curriculum was implemented in LEAs. For example, in a spring 2013 survey of about 96 respondents from LEAs, results indicated that about 67 percent of users accessed model curriculum from the State's model curriculum website, and of those, 65 percent found the model curriculum to be "very helpful" or "helpful". Fourteen percent of respondents were implementing all parts of the model curriculum while 60 percent were using the model curriculum as a framework for writing curriculum or making curricular decisions. Moving forward, the State plans to partner with an external evaluator to assess LEAs' progress in transitioning to CCSS.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) and instructional improvement systems (IIS) enhance the ability of States to effectively manage, use, and analyze education data to support instruction. Race to the Top States are working to ensure that their data systems are accessible to key stakeholders and that the data support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

Using data to improve instruction

The State's goals in this area involve developing and implementing an IIS that streamlines the model curriculum and NJ Educator Resource Exchange resources described above, administers formative assessments, and houses online professional development for teachers such as videos and webinars. According to the State, its data systems comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In spring 2013, the State released an RFP for the development and implementation of the IIS. Throughout the RFP review process, a State team consisting of the Director of STEM, Director of Literacy, Chief Innovation Officer, Solutions Architect and Race to the Top Project Manager reviewed bids and managed communication with other State offices that were vetting the proposal. The State team selected a vendor and signed a contract in early December 2013.

The State intended to launch the IIS in priority and focus schools by the beginning of SY 2013-2014, after initiating technology upgrades in schools and professional development for teachers in summer 2013. However, due to significant delays during the contract procurement process, the State did not implement these activities during the 2013-2014 school year.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

New Jersey engaged the RSN to provide technical assistance in understanding other States' experiences in procuring and implementing similar data systems. Using these findings, as well as lessons learned from implementing SAMS throughout Years 1 and 2, the State determined that its efforts would require significantly more support at the State level to manage the implementation of the IIS. Through an amendment, the State shifted funds to support the hiring of a small team to manage the logistics, technical requirements, and business analytics to implement the system once the contractor was in place.[10] In late December 2013, the State began the process of creating a new plan for implementing the IIS. The new plan proposes launching an IIS pilot in three school districts in April 2014, with plans for a wider release of the system in fall 2014.

[10] The State later reported that it found internal capacity to complete the tasks that were to be assigned to this small team, and therefore did not proceed with shifting the funds.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by adopting clear approaches to measuring student growth; designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals; conducting annual evaluations that include timely and constructive feedback; and using evaluation information to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, and tenure decisions. In addition, Race to the Top States are providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing effective supports to all educators.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

As was described in the Year 1 report, New Jersey launched cohort 2 of its teacher evaluation pilot program with 19 LEAs and a new principal evaluation pilot program with 15 LEAs at the beginning of SY 2012-2013. These pilot LEAs committed to implementing a State-approved educator evaluation system based on measures of student growth and teacher practice. At the end of SY 2012-2013, educators participating in the pilots received one of four evaluation ratings (highly effective, effective, partially effective and ineffective) based on their performance on the district's chosen observation rubric. In some cases, the final rating also included a measure of student growth. LEAs reported these ratings to the State in summer 2013. In January 2014, the State will release to each pilot district its student growth percentile (SGP) data – a comparison measure of a student's achievement on the State assessment from one year to the next. The State encourages LEAs to use this data to spark conversations with educators about performance and inform professional development plans.

In addition to supporting the pilot LEAs, New Jersey also released updated regulations regarding the steps that all LEAs must take during SY 2012-2013 in order to prepare for full implementation of the educator evaluation system in SY 2013-2014. These regulations required that LEAs select observation rubrics, and provide professional development to teachers and principals on the rubrics, and form a District Evaluation Committee. The State required that LEAs report on their progress against these milestones through online data collections in February and August 2013.

The State's educator evaluation activities also included the Shifting Gears professional development series as described above (see *Standards and Assessments*) as well as additional small group and online trainings on various components of the educator evaluation system. These trainings were supplemented by Evaluation Implementation Managers, State-level staff who deployed to LEAs to provide training and technical assistance throughout the school year.

The State began full implementation of the educator effectiveness system at the beginning of SY 2013-2014. In September 2013, the State hosted a series of presentations across the State designed to share information, answer questions and solicit feedback from educators about the educator effectiveness system.

Achieve NJ Advisory Committee

The State's EPAC was established in SY 2011-2012, consisting of 22 appointed members from various stakeholder groups. During Year 2, the committee made recommendations to the NJDOE for statewide policy development using best practices and lessons learned from LEAs piloting teacher and principal evaluation systems. During the two year pilot period, the EPAC held monthly meetings of the appointees and representatives from pilot districts during which they analyzed feedback and data from local and national sources. EPAC also established a number of subcommittees that focused on the impact of the educator effectiveness system in special areas such as early childhood and special education. The State reported that the EPAC played a major role in advocating for the expanded teacher evaluation pilot program; building a collaborative space for teachers, principals, superintendents and SEA officials; and providing opportunities for professional growth and leadership among educators. Once the State transitioned from pilot to full implementation of educator evaluation in fall 2013, EPAC evolved into a new body called the AchieveNJ Advisory Committee. This committee – comprised of teachers, principals, central offices administrators and representatives of professional associations and higher education – will collect and share information regarding implementation across LEAs.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The first and second cohorts of the teacher evaluation pilots taught the State a number of lessons about implementing educator evaluation statewide. The State released a number of reports, including two from the EPAC and one from an external evaluator, each of which evaluated the impact of the evaluation pilot programs and made recommendations for the State to improve processes and provide support. For example, the external evaluation of the first teacher pilot cohort found that, during the pilot some teachers were observed fewer times than was required by the evaluation system and that some LEAs did little to prepare to use teacher observation data to make personnel decisions or plan professional development. In response, the State increased its

professional development efforts for SY 2012-2013 and created specific plans for LEAs to link evaluation data to professional development.

As in Year 1, the State's Evaluation Implementation Managers provided another useful mechanism to understanding the successes and challenges of implementing the educator evaluation system at the LEA level. Implementation Managers were called upon to provide extra support in the selection and training of LEAs' observation rubrics, for example, and to provide additional training on developing strong student growth objectives (SGOs). Ultimately, the State's work piloting the educator evaluation informed the State's full implementation of its educator effectiveness system in SY 2013-2014.

As a part of the RSN's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Community of Practice, New Jersey participated in a Quality Evaluation Roll-Out workgroup meeting in summer 2013 during which the workgroup identified existing and new approaches for creating expectations for continuous improvement of educator evaluation systems. In particular, the New Jersey team focused on three high-priority areas of interest: improving the accuracy of teacher and leader effectiveness ratings over time, expanding principal capacity to successfully implement teacher evaluation systems, and communicating about the implementation and improvement of educator evaluation systems.

Charter Schools and Other Initiatives

Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charters and other innovative schools

New Jersey has committed to increasing the number and diversity of new, high-quality school options, particularly in the State's most distressed urban areas. Two major components of this strategy are the development of new charter schools, and the expansion of existing high-performing charters. State law empowers NJDOE as the sole charter authorizer; the agency has worked to maintain a high bar for charter school quality across the State, and to use charter schools strategically, as part of its comprehensive reform plan.

In Year 2, the State conducted its "preparedness review" of the eight charter schools that were approved during Year 1. During the review, evaluators assessed whether the schools had the academic and operational components in place to offer a strong educational program. Six of these charter schools were granted their final charters by the Commissioner in July 2013, and opened their doors in September 2013. Furthermore, the State's Office of Charter Schools accepted applications from new charter schools in April 2013, which were reviewed by teams of evaluators including an external reviewer. Prior to the application due date, the State's Office of Charter Schools held two technical assistance

training sessions for potential applicants in February and March 2013. Five applicants advanced to the second round of the application process and were interviewed by evaluators in September 2013. In October 2013, the State announced that it approved three new charter schools, two in Trenton and one in Jersey City. These new charter schools will undergo a preparedness review in summer 2014.

The State also implemented an expedited review process for charter operators with an existing track record of success who wished to open new charter schools in New Jersey. The State received nine applications in the October 2012 expedited review process and approved two charter schools in February 2013. The State launched another expedited review cycle in October 2013 in which it received six applications. Four applicants advanced to the next phase of review and will be interviewed by evaluators in January 2014.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

As in Year 1, the charter application review cycles took place according to the State's Race to the Top plan. One of the Race to the Top project managers participated in the review processes to ensure that reviews were conducted with the quality described in the Race to the Top plan.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

Race to the Top Phase 3 States are committed to providing a high-quality plan with a rigorous course of study in STEM. In their applications, grantees committed to allocating a meaningful share of their award to advances in STEM education in the State. A focus on STEM furthers the goal of preparing more students for an advanced study in sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including among underrepresented groups such as female students.

State's STEM initiatives

New Jersey has woven STEM initiatives throughout its Race to the Top plan. For example, science and mathematics units within the State's model curriculum include performance tasks and assessments and the use of technology in real-world applications. Additionally, the staff of the Regional Achievement Centers, the State's intervention network for its lowest-performing schools, includes instructional content specialists focused on improving mathematics outcomes in both priority and focus schools. NJDOE also is undertaking a partnership with the Progressive Science Initiative (PSI) and the Progressive Math Initiative (PMI), offered through the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), a higher education organization offering professional development to teachers in STEM subjects. Through professional development for mathematics and science teachers (specifically in physics, chemistry, biology, and K-12 mathematics), as well as training for prospective mathematics and science teachers, PSI and PMI support more than 20 courses. These and other efforts aim to advance the capacity of LEAs to improve mathematics and science instruction, and increase the number of highly effective mathematics and science educators in the State.

Developing mathematics and science model curricula

As described above (see *Standards and Assessments)*, in Year 2, the State revised its CCSS model mathematics curriculum to include enhanced SLOs and new classroom resources for teachers. According to State survey data, 66 percent of participating LEAs are implementing the mathematics model curriculum. In addition, the State worked to develop and make available model curriculum units in mathematics with accommodations for English learners and special education students. The State began the process of developing a model curriculum for science aligned with the NJCCCS and plans to post those resources by the beginning of Year 3.

Professional development for teachers

The State reported that eight participating and involved LEAs used Race to the Top funds to develop partnerships with CTL's PMI and PSI programs, slightly fewer than the State's goal of 16. This includes participating in the CTL Teaching Methods training courses and implementing PMI and/or PSI curricula in classrooms. In spring 2013, CTL offered a 10-day embedded professional development series with two large New Jersey high schools. In summer 2013, 15 teachers participated in CTL's PSI training and an additional 7 teachers earned endorsements in physics.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

As described above (see *Standards and Assessments*), the State revised the mathematics model curriculum based on lessons learned from Year 1. The State reported that 85 percent of priority schools and 24 percent of focus schools were implementing the revised mathematics curriculum and formative assessment units. Feedback from educators in these schools indicated that mathematics model curriculum in particular was a useful framework for designing school-wide curriculum. It served as a benchmark against which educators could evaluate other college- and career-ready resources. The State's model curriculum in science was delayed in Years 1 and 2 and will likely be available to educators at the beginning of Year 3.

While seven New Jersey teachers did earn endorsements in STEM subjects through the PMI and PSI programs in Year 2, fewer LEAs than expected participated in the program overall. The State did begin accompanying CTL onsite visits at schools but reported that it did not yet have a mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of these partnerships. Nevertheless, the State contends that this partnership, along with its other STEM initiatives, will help boost educator proficiency in STEM subjects across the State.

Looking Ahead to Year 3

In Year 3, the State plans to evaluate its model curriculum units and take stock of LEAs' progress in transitioning to the CCSS. It will also fully launch the Model Lessons project by recruiting educators to write exemplar lessons aligned to the CCSS, evaluating those lessons against the Tri-State/EQuIP rubric, and posting them to the Educator Resource Exchange. The State expects to continue supporting the model curriculum ongoing professional development sessions, including the next phase of Shifting Gears.

Now that the State has contracted a vendor, it plans to build and deliver the IIS on a revised timeline. The Year 3 activities include providing professional development to educators on everyday use of the IIS, supporting LEAs with priority and focus schools to upgrade the technology needed to implement the system, and building and testing the system's platform with a pilot of 3 LEAs in spring 2014. During Year 3, the State will transfer other existing online resources to the IIS, such as the formative assessment tool in SAMS and the Educator Resource Exchange, to streamline the accessibility of these tools for educators.

The teacher and principal evaluation pilot programs are complete and the State had begun full implementation of the educator effectiveness system in all LEAs at the end of Year 2. In Year 3, the State will continue monitoring LEAs to ensure proper implementation against the regulations and engaging Evaluation Implementation managers in cases where LEAs need additional support. Based on Year 3 implementation, the State may consider adjustments to various components of the system to ensure that educators and leaders are evaluated fairly and rigorously. Beginning in SY 2014-2015, the State will use educator effectiveness data to inform decisions regarding compensation, promotion and retention of teachers and principals.

Budget

For the State's expenditures through June 30, 2013, please see the APR Data Display at http://www.rtt-apr.us.

For State budget information, see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html.

For the State's fiscal accountability and oversight report, see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance-fiscal-accountability.html.

Alternative routes to certification: Pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English learners and students with disabilities): (1) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (2) are selective in accepting candidates; (3) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (4) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (5) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

Amendment requests: In the event that adjustments are needed to a State's approved Race to the Top plan, the grantee must submit an amendment request to the Department for consideration. Such requests may be prompted by an updated assessment of needs in that area, revised cost estimates, lessons learned from prior implementation efforts, or other circumstances. Grantees may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided that the following conditions are met: the revisions do not result in the grantee's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions; the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal; and the Department and the grantee mutually agree in writing to the revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve the revisions or modifications. If approved by the Department, a letter with a description of the amendment and any relevant conditions will be sent notifying the grantee of approval. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html.)

America COMPETES Act elements: The 12 indicators specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act are: (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA): On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the ARRA, historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The Department of Education received a $97.4 billion appropriation.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Report submitted by each grantee with outcomes to date, performance against the measures established in its application, and other relevant data. The Department uses data included in the APRs to provide Congress and the public with detailed information regarding each State's progress on meeting the goals outlined in its application. The final State APRs are found at www.rtt-apr.us.

College- and career-ready standards: State-developed standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time students graduate from high school.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) English language arts and mathematics standards developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including governors, chief State school officers, content experts, teachers, school administrators, and parents. (For additional information, please see http://www.corestandards.org/).

The **education reform areas** for Race to the Top: (1) Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career; (2) Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement; (3) Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and (4) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Supporting local educational agencies' (LEAs') implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing school intervention models.

Effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

High-minority school: A school designation defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

High-poverty school: Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

Highly effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

Instructional improvement systems (IIS): Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as instructional planning; gathering information (*e.g.*, through formative assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), interim assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

Invitational priorities: Areas of focus that the Department invited States to address in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants did not earn extra points for addressing these focus areas, but many grantees chose to create and fund activities to advance reforms in these areas.

Involved LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State's plan that necessitate full or nearly-full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State's Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State's application.

Participating LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year at the time of the award, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

The **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information please see http://www.parcconline.org/.)

Persistently lowest-achieving schools: As determined by the State, (1) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (2) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (1) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (2) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html.)

Qualifying evaluation systems: Educator evaluation systems that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that: (1) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (2) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

Glossary

Reform Support Network (RSN): In partnership with the Implementation and Support Unit, the RSN offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to grantees of the Race to the Top education reform initiative. The RSN's purpose is to support the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

The **School Improvement Grants (SIG)** program is authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. Funds are awarded to States to help them turn around persistently lowest-achieving schools. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html.)

School intervention models: A State's Race to the Top plan describes how it will support its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- *Turnaround model:* Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.

- *Restart model:* Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

- *School closure:* Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.

- *Transformation model:* Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Single sign-on: A user authentication process that permits a user to enter one name and password in order to access multiple applications.

The **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematic standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information please see http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/default.aspx.)

The **State Scope of Work:** A detailed document for the State project that reflects the grantee's approved Race to the Top application. The State Scope of Work includes items such as the State's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html.) Additionally, all participating LEAs are required to submit Scope of Work documents, consistent with State requirements, to the State for its review and approval.

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS): Data systems that enhance the ability of States to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The SLDS help States, districts, schools, educators, and other stakeholders to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. (For additional information please see http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about_SLDS.asp.)

Student achievement: For the purposes of this report, student achievement (1) for tested grades and subjects is (a) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in number (2) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (2) for non-tested grades and subjects, alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Student growth: The change in student achievement (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Value-added models (VAMs): A specific type of growth model based on changes in test scores over time. VAMs are complex statistical models that generally attempt to take into account student or school background characteristics in order to isolate the amount of learning attributable to a specific teacher or school. Teachers or schools that produce more than typical or expected growth are said to "add value."